

THE NEW YORK PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALISTS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

The Probabilities of War in Europe.

It will make a good deal of difference to the commercial world, at least, in this country whether a great war breaks out in Europe during the coming summer or not. A struggle between France and Germany would raise the price of our produce, lower the price of our bonds, and raise the premium on gold, send home the great mass of our tourists, and produce divers other consequences, social, financial, and even political, too numerous to mention. The chances of the speedy outbreak of such a conflict are, therefore, a very interesting subject of discussion. But when it rests largely with either of two reticent men, both of dark and tortuous counsel, and each wielding the forces of a great empire with but very feeble control or supervision from public opinion, to say when the fight shall begin, or whether it shall begin at all, all efforts to calculate probabilities are, of course, attended with great difficulty, and what is of more consequence, a boundless field of mischief is opened up to stock-jobbers and sensational reporters and correspondents. We indicated very briefly last week our reasons for thinking that there is, at present, no danger of an outbreak of hostilities between France and Prussia, and that the present tendency to panic on this subject is due to an unscrupulous or reckless use of the cable by speculators, and "enterprising" and imaginative news collectors. Nothing has since occurred to induce us to modify our opinion, and there can be no harm in stating the grounds of it fully, as we are satisfied they will be found sufficient to justify us, even if we should prove hereafter to be mistaken.

It is stated on very good authority that the idea of taking Luxembourg as a counterpoise to possible Prussian expansion in Germany, was first suggested to Napoleon by Bismarck himself at that early interview at Biarritz before the late war, when Bismarck was to the Emperor little better than a troublesome visionary. The probabilities are that the hint made at the time very little impression on the imperial mind, and that, judging from the calm manner in which the refusal of the Rhine provinces has since been received, we should not now witness the revival of the idea if Napoleon were not goaded into action of some kind by the late assaults of the opposition in the Corps Legislatif. There is feeling enough in France about Prussian aggrandizement to make it necessary that the Government should do something, or appear to be doing something; and the opposition to the new scheme of army organization is so strong that it is not distant from the prospect of a great war at no distant period will carry it through. For the left bank of the Rhine there is no use in speaking. It has been refused decidedly and peremptorily; and there is no Frenchman who does not know that an attempt to seize it would be met by the whole of Germany in arms, and resisted to the last man and the last thaler. Of protracted negotiation about that there is no chance. Bismarck would not talk about it, and dare not if he would. But about the cession of the Duchy of Luxembourg there is use in talking. This is a small bit of territory, valuable only for its fortresses. It has belonged to the house of Nassau since 1815; and although it is thoroughly German, and has furnished more than one wearer of the old imperial crown, and was a member of the Germanic Confederation, the dissolution of the Confederation by the battle of Sadowa has left it more under the control of Holland, *stricti juris*, than ever it has been before. Moreover, Holland is just now in mortal terror of Prussia. Bismarck is the bugbear of both the Dutch king and ministers, who, whatever the material advantages of absorption into the North German Confederation might be, naturally shrink from what would unquestionably be the virtual termination of the Dutch national existence, proud and illustrious as it is. Therefore, it is not at all unreasonable for France to hope that Holland may be induced to purchase, by the cession of a patch of land which has for her no earthly value, the protection and alliance of Prussia's great enemy. True, the Duchy is already occupied by Prussian troops; the population is almost exclusively German, and it is only amongst the upper classes that French leanings are found; and amongst the mass of German Liberals there would be strong opposition to its transfer to France. The speech of Herr Benning, an able and sensible man, in the North German Parliament, of which we received the report last week, reveals this clearly enough. On the other hand, the reply of Count Bismarck showed plainly that the Prussian Government does not deny the sovereign rights of the King of Holland over the duchy, does not deny the unwillingness of the inhabitants to enter the German Confederation, and admits that if Prussia interferes at all with the discretion of the Dutch Government in the matter, it should only be after taking counsel of the four other great powers which concurred in the treaty of 1839, by which the duchy was, at the partition of Holland and Belgium, annexed to the former. In short, it is abundantly clear that, however much German sentiment may be opposed to the cession, Prussia does not claim the right of peremptory prohibition; and the whole question is, for the present at least, a debatable one. It affords plenty of ground for any quantity of negotiation; and this we make bold to say is the very thing which at the present moment France needs.

It must be remembered that France has no material advantage to hope for through war with Germany. Jena and Austerlitz cannot be repeated; no Frenchman dreams of it. What France would fight for would be the retention of the leadership in European politics which she has lost by the events of the past year. To fight for this, without having made the victory as sure as organization, arms, numbers, and leaders can make it, would be a piece of folly Frenchmen, with all their impetuosity, are not likely to commit. A defeat in the field now would fix France irrevocably in a second or third-rate position. Whenever, therefore, she challenges Prussia to a struggle for the ascendancy, we believe it will be when she is able to put all her resources into the hands of her generals. That hot-headed counsels do not prevail at the Tuilleries is, we think, clearly proved both by M. Rouher's reply to M. Thiers and by the recent article in the *Moniteur*. In fact, it would be very hard to discover the "wild thirst for instant war" anywhere but in the London telegraph offices. Of course, the expectation of a speedy beginning of the contest is partly based on the supposition that Prussia, knowing it had to come sooner or later, would not wait French convenience, but would at once avail herself of her present superiority of strength to put

France hors de combat before she got her army reorganized or rearmed. Those who hold this theory are generally possessed with the idea that Prussia is a military monarchy like Austria, and that Bismarck has been so aided with his late success in the field that he now stands ready to engage all comers. The fact is, however, that there is no country in Europe to which war, and, above all, a war of even moderate length, such as a war with France would be sure to be, would prove so burdensome as to Prussia, because in none would so little of the fighting be done by professional soldiers, and so much by men drawn suddenly from all the trades and professions. Other nations hire men to fight; in Prussia the whole community may be said to lay down its tools and go to the field; and no statesman who has to weigh of the social machine whenever he mobilizes the army, would ever think of doing so with the recklessness or slowness with which the Emperor Napoleon or the Austrian Kaiser pours his forces into foreign territory to fight for a province or an idea. Prussia, though one of the most warlike of the great European States, has had a more peaceful history than any of them. In fact, from the foundation of the monarchy to the present day, a period of one hundred and fifty years, including the reign of the great Frederick and the wars of the French Revolution, she has enjoyed one hundred and twenty-five years of peace. Of which other of the great powers could this story be told? The last great war, too, cannot in any sense of the phrase be called a war of ambition or of aggression. It was but the expression in action of the desire of the German people for unity; and yet, tempting as the prospect seemed which it opened up to them, the hardships and sacrifices which the struggle seemed likely to entail were such that the popular opposition to it up to the moment when the army took the field was exceedingly fierce and bitter. And as to the prospect of a war of aggression, a war of pride or suspicion, or of ambition, or, in fact, a war of any kind except a defensive and a strictly defensive war, we cannot do better than quote the words of a distinguished Prussian Liberal, Professor Sybel, now a member of the German Parliament, addressed last September to M. Forcade, and to which subsequent events have lent every month fresh force:—

"With such an army (the Prussian) incredible things may at any given moment be accomplished; but what cannot be reached through it at any price is a state of prolonged war, such as a dynastic passion for conquest might create. With us the mobilization of the army is a calamity which strikes every family every counting-house, every field; there is not a single branch of the public service or of the industry of the country which is not touched. The country, you may be well assured, cannot impose such sacrifices upon itself except in supreme crises, our military organization is inconceivable for a defensive or for energetic offense of short duration, but it is utterly incapable of serving the purposes of a policy of permanent conquest. You recommend to the French Government the adoption of our military system. I can assure you that such a measure would be received by all Germany with the greatest joy, as a pledge of peace and security."

A Beam to be Plucked from Our Own

Do you own a copy of the census? If not, gentle reader, have the kindness to borrow ours to-day. True, statistics are rather forbidding reading in languid spring weather. But do not be deterred from reading this article by any apprehension of dryness in our figures. We mean to be very interesting on a dull subject. The census of 1860 gave us what we shall never get again—totals of population marked free and slave. Thank God, the slave population of the United States is blotted out forever! The Southern slaves are now not only freemen, but citizens and voters. Nevertheless, the Northern negroes still are kept in a secondary slavery—marked by the law with a stigma on account of their complexion—denied their political rights—excluded from the ballot-box. The Northern people, in their ancient and long-continued subservience to slavery, framed constitutions which (with few exceptions in New England) were, and are, hostile to the negro's enfranchisement. These old Constitutions must now give place to new. We make this demand, first because it is right, and next because the chief argument against negro suffrage for the South is, that negro suffrage is denied in the North. This reasoning carries great weight; but its weight is not against giving the negro his ballot in the South; it is simply against refusing the negro his ballot in the North. In round numbers, the South has four million blacks, the North half a million. Now shall the North, by opposing the political rights of her meagre half a million, give a pretext to the South for opposing the political rights of her populous four millions? Let us exhibit the exact proportion of whites and blacks in all the States except the unreconstructed ten and the New England five:—

Table with 3 columns: State, Whites, Blacks. Rows include Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Oregon, Nebraska, Nevada, California.

Now, we desire thoughtful men in the North to ponder this evidence of the almost incredible majority of whites over blacks in the loyal States; and, after examining the table well, we desire them to ask themselves the question, if black men can now be allowed to vote in South Carolina and other Southern States, where they actually outnumber the whites, why, then, cannot black men be allowed to vote also in the Northern States, where they constitute only one-fiftieth part of the population? If it is right and safe to give the negro the franchise in South Carolina, is it anything but wrong and mean to deny him the same privilege in Connecticut? The States that now need reconstruction are the North.

New Phase of Reconstruction in the South—Fun, Fire, and Fury.

When a barrel of new beer is exposed to the sun there must be ventages for the escape of the gas, or the hoops must be very strong, or there will be an explosion, scattering beer, froth, hoops, and staves in every direction. So when a great revolution has turned the old political institutions and ideas of a great community topsy-turvy and its social system inside out, there must be a fermentation among the elements of the body politic, more or less alarming, before we can have a settled condition of things. This fermentation is now going on throughout the five military districts into which the ten outside Rebel Southern States are divided. Here and there, too, we have frequent and increasing explosions of gas, with occasional damages to life and limb, although not often of a serious character. Bellicose editors and politicians, known in the South as

"bomb-proofs" during the war, have been of late getting up some gunpowder excitements in Memphis, Vicksburg, and elsewhere, and generally they are furious and fiery, as noisy fellows are apt to be when fighting is over. A South Carolina correspondent, for example, informs us that among the combatibles of that thoroughly subjugated State there are some half dozen duels on the carpet on points of honor and ancient chivalry. This, too, while the real fighting leaders of the Rebellion, such as Lee, Longstreet, Hampton, Beauregard, and all others, are all for peace, submission, and reconstruction.

Under this state of things we are not surprised that Mr. John Minor Botts, of Virginia, should turn up in a somewhat belligerent attitude. The record of Mr. Botts during the war, though not that of a fighting man, and the record of a Southern Unionist who could not be shaken from his faith, even in Castle Thunder. It is natural, perhaps, that from his treatment under the Government of Jeff Davis he should come out of the war a flaming radical; but for all that he should not permit his zeal to outrun his discretion. He complains to us of a certain letter from a Richmond correspondent, which, through an oversight, was admitted into our columns. Mr. Botts, touching this objectionable letter, opens a correspondence with General Schofield which settles the case completely in favor of the complainant. Thus amply vindicated, the submission of General Schofield's testimony to this journal, in behalf of the complainant, would have been enough. But Mr. Botts goes out of his way to inform General Schofield that "the systematic effort at defamation and detraction seems about to be resumed by the *Herald*, whose editor I had the misfortune, some twelve or fifteen years ago, unwittingly to offend, I have determined to try conclusions" with him "by a resort to legal remedies."

Having resolved upon this mode of redress, Mr. Botts should have stopped just there; but he spells his case as complainant and lawyer, not in saying, "Now, Mr. Bennett, there is no necessity for any words between us," for we agree in that, but in adding these words of bad temper and bad taste, to wit:—"Your paper has been at the service of every blackguard, of high or low degree, who, from motives of personal or political malignity, desired to defame me for the last eighteen years," and then, in a towering passion, he talks of "the licentiousness of the press," "defamation and detraction," "shameless mendacity," and "mendacity and malignity" as unworthy a schoolboy in such a case, but wholly inexcusable and incomprehensible in a man of the age and experience of Mr. Botts.

Let him be assured that we have no recollection of any offense committed by him against us, except his offense of making war upon John Tyler and resolving to "head him or die," after having been his travelling companion on the same journey, after having shared with him the same supper of corn bread and bacon, and after having, like a brother, slept with him under the same blanket. There has been no wicked design in any of our subsequent collisions with Mr. Botts from time to time. They have been only the accidents of the whirligig of politics. Under the rule of John Randolph, of Roanoke, to "pay as we go," we have no outstanding balance against Mr. Botts, nothing against him of "mendacity, malignity," or any such nonsense. Cheerfully placing him right upon the record in regard to his conference with General Schofield, we leave it to Mr. Botts himself to determine whether the tone and temper of his letter in the premises are entitled to or unworthy the consideration we have given it.

France and Prussia.

A week ago we received a cable despatch stating that Count Bismarck had sent an energetic note to France demanding of the Emperor Napoleon his reasons for arming, and asking the immediate cessation of warlike preparations. Such a note, one would think, must have produced throughout Europe the most profound excitement, and it has therefore been a cause of general surprise that, during the week since elapsed, so little has been heard of the effects of the Prussian note. It has since been stated that the people of Luxembourg generally were opposed to being sold to France; that a proposition was under consideration to declare Luxembourg neutral territory; that, in case of war, Bavaria and Baden would aid Prussia; but not a word of what the official and unofficial press of Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Vienna had to say of a note so extraordinary in character. This strange silence of the cables could not fail to make the impression that either the report of Count Bismarck's note was a gross exaggeration, or that the information sent to us concerning one of the most important events of the present year has been most glaringly deficient.

Yesterday morning we had another alarming despatch. The negotiations between France and Prussia are said to have been broken off. The prominence which the entire press of Europe has for several weeks been giving to the Luxembourg question, ought certainly to have furnished material enough for cables and more intelligible despatches. We have thus far had no intelligence of any direct negotiations between France and Prussia. By the Scotia we received the news that the Government of Holland has informed Prussia that Luxembourg would never be sold without the previous consent of Prussia. Bismarck had taken the ground that, although Germany could not claim the entrance of Luxembourg into the Confederation, she had a right to oppose the sale to France of a fortress which has been completed by the money of the old Federal Diet, and which, in the hands of France, would constitute a permanent danger to Germany. He had also insisted that the consent of all the powers which had guaranteed the Treaty of 1839 was requisite for such a sale. It was further stated that Russia had protested against the sale, and that the English Ministry had officially declared that the sale could not take place, because the consent of Prussia would never be given.

This is all the authentic information we have thus far received about the relations of France and Prussia to the Luxembourg question. Supporting the intelligence given in the cable despatch yesterday morning to be correct, it seems to be that the efforts of Prussia to prevail upon France to abandon the claimed right of purchasing Luxembourg have failed. But intelligence fuller and more distinct than the despatches thus far received, is needed to explain the present situation. The latest articles in the semi-official papers of Prussia indicate, however, that the relations between France and Prussia were not of a friendly nature. —After writing the above, we received a despatch from Berlin stating that Napoleon is reported to be strengthening his forces and military posts on the frontier, putting his artillery on a war footing, purchasing ambulances, and that the reserves of 1868 would be called out on the first of May. Russia is also reported to be making active military

work; one is, by asking each State, in turn, to amend its own Constitution; the other is, by amending the Federal Constitution itself, which thereby amends all the State Constitutions at once. We prefer the swifter process and safer result of changing by one beneficent touch the supreme law of the whole land to the alternative of making a beggar's pilgrimage from State to State asking for justice by piecemeal.

The Constitutional amendment proposed by Congress, and already adopted by a large proportion of the States, is a half-way measure, inadequate to the situation, unjust to the negro, and unworthy of the Republic.

We respectfully move, in its stead, a new amendment, which, with even-handed justice, shall establish the negro's political rights throughout the North as well as throughout the South.

Fellow-countrymen, it ought to bring a blush to every white cheek in the loyal North to reflect that the political equality of American citizens is likely to be sooner achieved in Mississippi than in Illinois—sooner on the plantation of Jefferson Davis than around the grave of Abraham Lincoln.

Conservative Organization in the South.

The views we have expressed in regard to the future of parties at the South, and the probable formation of an organization independent of existing parties, and embracing offshoots from all, receive timely confirmation in the following remarks of the *Times* of New Orleans:—

"We fervently hope that in the various movements for the organization of a conservative party in the South, the extreme and unwise taken to exclude extremists and politicians who have figured conspicuously in the past and present of the South, will be abandoned. A good and honest citizen in one party ground of division, the great mass of the Union party proper, and in this combination, the order of the recent Confederate or Secession party are bound to the same organization. Neither must we neglect or discourage the other by any attempt to revive old issues and distinctions. There must be a full and frank oblivion of old disputes and controversies. The votes and efforts of all are needed, and we are all, those who compose the party who are put forward prominently, to lead and direct such organization, whose names are published as officers and committee-men, should be as far as possible be chosen and selected from all the various parties, Union, secession, conservative, or radical, who are willing to work for the common object of all, to wit, the rescue of our State and city from political parties who have descended upon us to plunder our substance and conspire against our freedom and rights. Let us have no more of the kind of this great conservative party should be careful not to give prominent positions in this contest to those who are more conspicuous in their opposition to the Union cause. Let the champions of that cause take the front ranks in a contest against their bitter enemies and the enemies of our peace, order, and welfare of the country! Let their lead and direction be followed and supported by all others of the various parties who, however divided on other subjects and occasions, are at least united on the common desire and effort to save our State and country."

As we understand the movement proposed, it is not intended to be partisan in any sense, or to compete with the advocates of another policy on party grounds. The private letter we published the other day from Galveston correctly indicated, we think, both what is probable and what is prudent. In their present position the Southern people cannot benefit themselves, while they might complicate their embarrassments, by entering upon the old style of party warfare. For all immediate political purposes they are powerless, and they are most likely to restore their material interests, and hasten the restoration of national harmony, by limiting their efforts to a full and faithful compliance with the letter and spirit of the law. More than this could not be expected at their hands; and beyond this, we presume, the words of our New Orleans namesake are not designed to apply. They indicate simply an alliance for the purpose of giving effect to the law in a manner most conducive to the future welfare and happiness of the Southern people.

It is commonly proposed that rational, moderate men, whatever their past party affiliations, should combine to prevent the success of the demagogues and firebrands who would alienate class from class, and, under the pretense of extreme loyalty, would lay the foundations of future trouble. What men have is of infinitely less moment than what they are. That point which concerns the country relates to the present purposes of the people of the South. To heap upon the masses disabilities because of the Rebellion, were to render certain future discontent and alienity. To make sure that they are for the Union now—that they recognize the supreme authority of the Federal Government now—that they accept the conditions dictated by Congress now—and that they are prepared in good faith to do all that the law enjoins, is the one essential thing. And this is precisely what the proposed organization in Louisiana will accomplish. If carried out in the spirit of the article we have cited, it will insure the development of a healthy loyal sentiment, will frustrate the plans of partisan incendiaries, and will inspire confidence in the mind of the North.

What is talked of in Louisiana will, we trust, be acted upon in other States. In every one of them, and especially in Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia, influences are at work which prove the existence of an element that is constantly acquiring compactness and strength. It is impossible to note the accessions daily made to the friends of the law, as opposed to the malcontents who centre their expectations in the Supreme Court, without feeling that the better portion of the South is on the side of those who counsel immediate and friendly action. Among these may be found persons who are best qualified to extend the movement for the common benefit of the South. From party combinations they would naturally stand aloof. That which needs their help is a movement superior to parties. It is a movement towards local union as well as the return of reconstructed States to the Union; and its progress will be watched anxiously yet hopefully.

New Phase of Reconstruction in the South—Fun, Fire, and Fury.

When a barrel of new beer is exposed to the sun there must be ventages for the escape of the gas, or the hoops must be very strong, or there will be an explosion, scattering beer, froth, hoops, and staves in every direction. So when a great revolution has turned the old political institutions and ideas of a great community topsy-turvy and its social system inside out, there must be a fermentation among the elements of the body politic, more or less alarming, before we can have a settled condition of things. This fermentation is now going on throughout the five military districts into which the ten outside Rebel Southern States are divided. Here and there, too, we have frequent and increasing explosions of gas, with occasional damages to life and limb, although not often of a serious character. Bellicose editors and politicians, known in the South as

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LEGAL NOTICES.

NOTICE.—COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. AMALIA VOLKELER vs. PHILIPP VOLKELER. The operations of witnesses for libellant in the above case will be taken before E. K. NICHOLS Esq., the Examiner, appointed by the Court to take testimony in the above case, at the office of the subscriber No. 218 N. THIRD STREET, Philadelphia, on the 20th day of April, A. D. 1867, at 4 o'clock P. M.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. ANNA L. HARRISAW vs. her next friend, etc vs. HARRISAW. December Term, 1866. No. 84. In Divorce. To Samuel Harrisaw, Respondent. Take notice of a Rule in the above case returnable before the Court at 2 o'clock P. M., at 10 o'clock A. M., to show cause why a divorce a vinculo matrimonii should not be decreed. RICHARD T. TOW, Attorney for Libellant.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. ASSIGNED ESTATE OF WARREN F. FERGUSON. The Auditor appointed by the Court to audit, settle and adjust the accounts of EMILY S. WOLFE, Administratrix, c. t. of the Estate of WARREN F. FERGUSON, and to report distribution of the balance in the hands of the accountants, will meet the parties interested for the purpose of his appointment on THURSDAY, the 27th day of APRIL, at 10 o'clock P. M., at No. 128 S. FIFTH STREET, in the City of Philadelphia. E. H. THAYER, Auditor.

IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. ESTATE OF JAMES C. WOODRILL, deceased. The Auditor appointed by the Court to audit, settle and adjust the accounts of EMILY S. WOLFE, Administratrix, c. t. of the Estate of JAMES C. WOODRILL, deceased, and to report distribution of the balance in the hands of the accountants, will meet the parties interested for the purpose of his appointment on THURSDAY, the 27th day of APRIL, at 10 o'clock P. M., at No. 128 S. FIFTH STREET, in the City of Philadelphia. AMOS BRIGGS, Auditor.

SHIPPING.

THE PHILADELPHIA AND SAVANNAH REGULAR LINE. STEAMSHIP COMPANY. REGULAR LINE. TONAWANDA, 500 tons, Captain Jacob Telford. The steamship TONAWANDA will leave for the above port on Saturday, April 20, at 6 o'clock A. M. from the second wharf below Spruce Street. Through passage tickets sold and freight taken for all points in connection with the Georgia Central Railroad. WILLIAM L. JAMES, General Agent, No. 218 N. THIRD STREET, Philadelphia. Agents at Savannah, Hunter & Gammell.

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STEAM TO LIVERPOOL—CALLING AT QUEENSTOWN.—The *Invincible*, sailing every week, carrying the United States Mails. SAILORS' TICKETS TO LONDON AND BACK. CITY OF BOSTON, Saturday, April 20. CITY OF BALTIMORE, Saturday, April 27. CITY OF CINCINNATI, Saturday, May 4. CITY OF WASHINGTON, Saturday, May 11. Each succeeding Saturday and Wednesday, at noon, from Pier No. 12, City Hall.

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FOR NEW YORK—SWIFTSURR. Transportation Company Despatch and White Star Line, via Delaware and Harlan Canal, on and after the 15th of March, leaving daily at 12 M. and 5 P. M., connecting with all Northern and Eastern Lines. For freight, which will be taken upon accommodating terms, apply to WILLIAM M. BAIRD & CO., No. 128 S. DELAWARE AVENUE.

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